My Great Escape Led Me to You

Chapter 10

Emily Blair's mind drifted.

All of this had played out before, right here in this same living room-only, back then, she'd handled it all so differently.

In her previous life, she'd made a scene, trying every possible way to stop Isabella Austin from moving into the Lane house, insisting that Isabella and Andrew Lane had already broken up. Her efforts had only turned her into a laughingstock, one humiliation after another.

The staff watched her with cold indifference. Grandpa Kevin had simply looked on, unmoved.

Isabella, meanwhile, had always stood quietly behind Andrew, untouched and elegant, her poise a stark contrast to Emily's own desperate, frantic behavior.

She remembered it all too well: Andrew Lane forcing her to apologize, making her kneel in the garden in the middle of the night and reflect on her actions.

That night, she'd watched Isabella slip into Andrew's room. The lights never went out. Through the closed window, Emily could just make out their shadows-two figures together.

Suddenly, halfway up the stairs, Emily paused, a memory surfacing with sharp clarity.

Why had she tried so desperately to keep Isabella out of the house?

In her previous life, she'd followed Andrew to a business trip in Cabinda, where she and Isabella had ended up staying in the same hotel.

Isabella had drugged the water in both her and Andrew's glasses-not to set them up together, but to interrupt at just the right moment, to accuse Emily of seduction and turn Andrew against her forever.

But things hadn't gone according to plan. The lock on Andrew's hotel room door had broken that night.

Come morning, Isabella had burst in with a group of people. By then, it was already too late.

Just as Isabella had intended, Andrew had despised her from that day forward. She became his lifelong disgrace.

And it was that night she'd gotten pregnant with Daisy-a child who should never have existed.

Because of the pregnancy, she'd dropped out of school, never even earning her high school diploma. Finding a decent job had been impossible ever since.

Her sudden halt on the staircase drew Amelia Lane's attention.

"Emily Blair, what's with the act? I bet you're feeling pretty miserable with Isabella moving in, aren't you?"

Even with her back turned, Emily could feel Andrew's sharp gaze drilling into her, as

if he were silently evaluating whether she posed any threat to Isabella.

It was the same look she'd seen on his face so many times before.

Emily fought to steady her breath and heartbeat, quickly climbing the rest of the stairs, shutting herself in her room.

She leaned against the door, breathing deeply, trying to calm herself.

She couldn't know if Isabella would try the same trick again, but she had to be on guard.

The rest of the afternoon passed in silence. The whole house was quiet. Emily didn't go down for lunch. After two halfhearted attempts to call her, the housekeeper gave up.

It wasn't until evening that Isabella appeared at her door, knocking gently and smiling with studied warmth as she offered Emily a glass of fresh-squeezed juice.

"You didn't eat anything all afternoon, so I made some juice just for you. Please, try it."

Emily kept her hand on the doorknob, not letting Isabella step inside. Her voice was steady. "No, thanks. I'm not thirsty."

Isabella's smile faltered, but she pressed the juice forward. "It's really good. Grandpa Kevin, Andrew, and Amelia all had some and said it was delicious. I wanted you to try it, too."

As she spoke, she glanced shyly back at Andrew, who was standing behind her.

“Andrew said I'll be staying here for the next few months. We should try to get along, Ms. Blair. There's no need to be so guarded around me."

Emily's grip on the doorknob tightened. “I said, no—" "Emily Blair."

Andrew's voice cut in, sharp and commanding. Emily's head snapped toward him.

Andrew's eyes were cold and unforgiving, his lips pressed together in irritation. "Emily Blair, stop making things difficult for Isabella."